

Cooking Wild Game

Excerpts from the book: From Mountaintop to Tabletop By: Matt Pelton

Properties of Wild Game:

1. Wild Game is lower in fat and cholesterol than domestic meat, especially Saturated Fats and LDL Cholesterol, which can clog arteries and cause health problems.
2. Wild Game is free of Chemicals, Growth Hormones, and Food Dyes.
3. Wild Game is a great source of Essential Amino Acids, which are necessary for muscle development and maintenance.
4. Wild Game is low in harmful Bacteria.
5. Wild Game is a good source for Omega 3 fatty acids, essential for Brain Development.

Learning the differences between Wild and Domestic Meat:

1. Wild Game is comprised mostly of Red Muscle tissue also known as slow twitch muscle. This means the muscle fibers are longer and smaller in diameter than White or fast twitch muscle tissue which most domestic meat is comprised of.
2. Wild meat is darker than domestic meat because of higher amounts of Myosin, which is the most abundant type of protein in muscle tissue.
3. Wild meat has less Saturated Fat than a lean chicken breast.

Source: USDA Handbook

Cooking Wild Game:

1. Wild Game has to be prepared in one of two ways: Hot and fast or slow and Cool.
2. Because Wild Game has very little fat, you must use a small amount of oil in your skillet to cook it (I Prefer Olive oil or Canola oil because they are healthier).
3. Never season the meat until the meat has been seared properly, otherwise you will lose all the moisture in the meat.
4. Because Wild Game is darker in color than Domestic meat, the same color indicators do not apply for doneness. For example: A medium Elk steak will appear to look similar to a medium rare to rare cut of Beef.
5. Do not cut into the meat to check doneness, rather use a meat thermometer or a process called "sweating the Meat" to tell when it is done.
6. Always allow Wild Meat to thaw out on its own. Microwaves will bind and coagulate the sensitive protein strands making your meat tough.
7. Package and store your Wild Game properly to avoid Freezer Burn. If freezer burn does occur, cut off the bad sections of meat and place the remaining meat in a plastic bag with a little Vinegar or Lemon juice for 15 minutes, Rinse the meat off in cold water, and allow it to air dry for a couple of minutes before cooking.